

Final Minutes
Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting
Wednesday, July 01, 2026, 6:30 PM

Present:

Selectboard (SB):

Mike DeSocio (MD) Chair*
Doug Wellman (DW) Vice-Chair
Bruce Mello (BM)
Emily Beer (EB)
E. Mark Bills (EMB)

*Via Zoom

Town Officers:

Vanessa Ballou (VB) Recording Clerk

Public:

FactTV*
Mark Anderson (MA)
Alex Stradling (AS)*
Michael Miller (MM)*
Jon Ballou (JDB)*

1. Doug Wellman called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM and introduced all attendees.

2. Changes to Agenda

BM stated that 6.C. Ramp – ADA Discussion should be tabled.

3. Review Draft Minutes

A. Regular Agenda Meeting – June 17, 2026

DW made a **motion** to approve the minutes of the June 17, 2026 SB Meeting as drafted.

BM seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Members of the Public

A. Scheduled Member of the Public-5 min

Sheriff Mark Anderson - Regional Policing

MA has been with the Sheriff's Department since 2004 and as Sheriff since 2019 and attended the SB meeting to explain Act 104 which is a pilot project designed with input from him, the Windham County Towns, and the legislature to provide a better service to the rural towns that choose to participate. It's an 8-year project with annual reporting back to the Vermont Legislature. A Regional Governance Council will be created with a Selectboard Member from each participating Town. The Council will be responsible for planning, developing the bylaws, and developing a budget to pay for law enforcement and related services for the participating Towns. A rough estimate based on last year's budget of \$750,000 for contract services across 15 towns is about \$33 per person in each participating town – or roughly \$18,000 for Brookline. If Brookline decides not to participate, the Town can still participate in the process as a non-voting member. If the Town decides not to participate, it will still get services from the state police.

MA would like a decision by July 15, 2026. The Council's first meeting is planned for August 2026.

B. Unscheduled Members of the Public- 2 Min

None.

5. Warrants

A. Payroll

DW made a **motion** to approve check warrant 2652 in the amount of \$8,071.25.

EB seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Accounts Payable

DW made a **motion** to approve check warrant 2701 in the amount of \$8,060.67. EB seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

DW made a **motion** to approve check warrant 2651 in the amount of \$2,500. EB seconded. This check is for Red Mill Consulting for the architect and will be reimbursed through the \$2,500 Preservation Trust of Vermont grant. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Old Business

A. FEMA Hill Road Easements/Contract Signing

The contract has not yet been signed. Sam Bourne is working to adjust his insurance coverage to meet the VLCT's (Vermont League of Cities and Towns) requirements (\$2 million per occurrence and \$4 million in aggregate) and requests from the landowners to be added. The VLCT contract for large projects, such as the Hill Road Stone Arch culvert, also requires a performance or completion bond. The RFP (Request for Proposal) did not include the requirement for such a bond, and Sam Bourne is researching the cost. In the meantime, the work needs to start as soon as possible. The SB decided to move forward with the contract but amend that clause to include wording such as "the contractor will pursue this coverage in good faith, and the Town will opt to elect the coverage and fund it."

MD received another email from FEMA: requesting the current and planned dimensions for the guardrails. He will forward the new email to EMB, Everett Hammond, and Sam Bourne so that the Town can respond and FEMA can move forward with completing their sign-off.

B. Paving Update/Contract Signing

The Bazin Brothers have signed the contract. They crossed off the clause regarding the performance bond because it was not in the RFP. The SB signed the contract. Archie Clark has suggested another road segment for paving from the recycling bin towards the Town Office on Grassy Brook Road to take advantage of having the equipment on site – this discussion to be continued as it may impact how much the Town needs for a line of credit.

C. Ramp-ADA Discussion

Tabled

D. Line of Credit- Melissa Brown

Melissa Brown is working on getting the Town a line of credit. MD reviewed the cash flow projections. The SB discussed when and how much might actually be needed.

7. New Business

A. Road Naming

DW made a **motion** to table discussion of road naming. EB seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Regional Policing Representative

DW made a **motion** to approve joining the Regional Policing Council. BM seconded. The SB discussed the advantages which include having a voice in the development of the budget and services to be provided and having access to policing, which the Town currently does not have.

The main disadvantage is the requirement that the Town would need to commit to the estimated first year's costs (estimated to be \$18,000) without the Town approval. DW **withdrew his motion**. EB seconded. EB will send a message to the Town asking for feedback.

DW **motioned** to table further discussion until the next SB meeting. EB seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Appoint Marjorie Ray- Round School House Committee

DW made a **motion** to appoint Marjorie Ray to the Round Schoolhouse Committee. BM seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Reports and Updates

A. Building Commissioner – Bruce Mello

BM is waiting to hear back from the architect. He attended the past Building Use Working Group meeting.

B. Emily Beer

No update.

C. Highway Supervisor – E. Mark Bills

EMB has been mowing the roadsides, paving over the new Grassy Brook Culverts in preparation for the road paving, has scraped Putney Mountain Road, and also touched up parts of Athens Road. After July 4th, he plans on installing two culverts in new locations on Ellen Ware Road; this work is covered by an \$8,000 GIA (Grants in Aid) award.

D. Doug Wellman

No update.

E. Mike DeSocio

No update.

9. Communications

1) Appointment of Fire Wardens

Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation has informed the Town that effective July 1, 2026, the Fire Department Chief is now the Fire Warden for all the towns under their jurisdiction. And the Fire Warden is responsible for appointing Deputy Fire Wardens.

2) Cota & Cota PreBuy Plan

The SB discussed the details and will decide whether to enter into the PreBuy Plan at the next meeting.

10. Set Agenda

A. Regular Meeting July 15, 2026

- 1) Minutes from July 1, 2026 Regular SB Meeting
- 2) Regional Policing
- 3) Line of Credit
- 4) Ramp-ADA Discussion
- 5) Road Naming
- 6) Cota & Cota PreBuy
- 7) Other

B. Future Meeting

- 1) Round Schoolhouse (communication from Laurie)

11. Other Discussion Not Requiring Action

A Special SB Meeting is needed to approve Town Taxes and is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, July 8th at 9:00 AM at the Town Office. If not already signed, the contract with Sam Bourne can also be counter signed.

12. Executive session re: Property Valuation and Review Hearing, docket number PVR-2025-1 to discuss the litigation and attorney-client communications.

Motion 1: EB moved to find that premature general public knowledge regarding the discussion of the Property Valuation and Review Hearing, docket number PVR-2025-1, would clearly place the town at a substantial disadvantage, because the selectboard risks disclosing its litigation plan and confidential attorney-client communications with the public. DW seconded. The motion passed with 4 voting in favor and MD abstaining.

Motion 2: EB moved that we enter into executive session to discuss the upcoming Property Valuation and Review Hearing, docket number PVR-2025-1 under the provisions of Title 1, Section 313(a)(1)(E) and (F) of the Vermont Statutes.” DW seconded. The motion passed with 4 voting in favor and MD abstaining.

The SB entered into executive session at 9:03 PM, VB exited the conference room and closed the door. FactTV recording was turned off. The SB exited the executive session at 9:29 PM. EB made a motion to exit the executive session. DW seconded. The motion passed unanimously by the 4 SB Members attending the executive session (DW, BM, EB, EMB). The other attendees returned to the meeting and FactTV recording was resumed. No actions, motions, or votes took place during the executive session.

13. Adjourn the Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Vanessa Ballou, Recording Clerk